Malcolm X
May 19, 1925 — Feb. 21, 1965

LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE

February 17, 1971 #318

table of contents

dress rehearsal for argentine revolution:
how it happened in the streets of cordoba........1

hanoi: "it really changes your perspective,"
interview with a turned-on business student......3

harrisburg six arraigned in kissinger-kidnap "plot"...4

"jury qualifying department" snoops in new york.......4

"no heroes, no rhetoric...we need whole families":
a letter from ericka huggins and bobby seale.....5

washington group rips out phone taps..................5

tennessee mother fights husband's cruelty in court....6

canadian indian sent to jail for 32 years
on charges of break & entry, and theft........7

l.a. welfare chief cuts off aid to transvestites......8

women and the u.s. war machine........................9

"WHAT AM I DOING WITH A GUN?"
thu van -- saigon soldier -- speaks up..........10

when the prison gates are open:
four murders new york prison officials hid......12

plus assorted short topics++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

graphics

cover: Malcolm X, credit LNS

photos from N. Vietnam -- children at school and
women hugging...................................P-1
drawings of women & children by Kathe Kollwitz......P-2
free bobby & ericka -- announcement of New Haven
demonstration on March 13......................P-3
kids -- in park and subway of New York.............P-4
photo of an auto worker and men against abortion....P-5
photo of ericka huggins and some of her poetry......P-6

==

table of malcontents

staff collective: rosa borenstein, anne dockery, beryl epstein, howie epstein, mark feinstein, linda firestone, theodore franklin, sally hamann, alan howard, karen kearns, andy marx, kathy mulvihill, barbara rothkrug, nina sabaroff, mike shuster, & jessica siegel

comrades: connie walker, isabel black, trudy babbits

correspondents: sheila ryan & george cavaletto (beirut, lebanon); jan von flatern (new haven); david moberg (chicago); mike kazin (portland, oregon)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

tion, fairness, equity, respect and the right to human dignity and justice."

* * * *

The Gay Community Prisoner Defense Committee, made up of a number of gay organizations, is sponsoring a rally to which all revolutionary people are invited, in support of Lavon, who was gay, on February 27 at 2 at the Tombs. Among their demands are the prosecution of whoever was responsible for his death--not just the guards but people in control at the top like George McGrath, Commissioner of Correction and Mayor Lindsay. They also demand that Richard Harris, the prisoner who was a witness to the beating of Lavon, must be freed. Their other demands range from an investigating committee of the prison system made up by women, gays, blacks, Puerto Ricans, to the ending of beatings and shock treatment.

-30-

****

LIBERATION News Service
February 17, 1971
Packet #318
Published Twice a week
Subscriptions: $20/month, $240/year

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE
PAID AT NEW YORK, NY

160 Claremont Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10027
Phone: 212-749-2200

If you are missing pages or have graphics that got messed up in the press, let us know. We'll send you what you need as soon as possible.

"THE CORDOBAZO" REVISTED:
A CONVERSATION WITH MARIO

by Sydney Smith

LIBERATION News Service

CORDOBA (LNS) -- *Until May of 1969, most Argentinians thought of Cordoba, the country's second largest city, as a delightful summer resort area. The city, with a population of about one million and a considerable automotive industry, is built at the base of a mountain range filled with fresh streams, camping sites, and a casino here and there.*

After May of 1969, after workers poured out of their factories into the streets, on strike. a new word entered the nation's lexicon, "El Cordobazo."

El Cordobazo was the dress rehearsal for Argentina's revolution.

* * * *

I met Mario Finnetti in a Cordoba cafe. He is a 29-year-old ex-employee of the city's Kaiser plant. The plant is now owned and run by Renault, but everybody still refers to it as Kaiser -- the first automobile manufacturer to come (in 1956) to Cordoba.

(Kaiser's approach to increased profits has been to go into an area where there's no competition, produce inferior products inefficiently, and then sell out when competition comes along. When Ford and Fiat came to Cordoba in the early sixties, Kaiser sold out to Renault and set up shop in India.)

When I asked Mario how he had come to be unemployed, he replied: "A slight disagreement with the management. We had different ideas about how the firm should be run."

Mario lives in a house with his two sisters, brother-in-law, mother and father, and a brother and sister-in law upstairs. The house is old and roomy. The day I went there for lunch, we sat at the dining-room table, and Mario began to tell me about the Cordobazo.

"I'd say it started in July 66, when the military knocked out (President) Illia. Fifteen days later the government intervened in the universities --police, monitors, professors fired.-That's when the agitation began in Cordoba, mostly students with a few workers. But the police had the misfortune of killing Santiago Pampillon, who was a student and also a worker at Kaiser. This was the beginning of the confrontation with police, street demonstrations, etc. that led up to the Cordobazo in May, '69 "

I asked him how he could explain the increase in the participation of workers in the confrontations with police.

"The workers weren't immediately affected by the fall of Illia; the students were But then gradually there was intervention of the unions, freezing of salaries, and an increase in the cost of living. The workers took to the streets and found themselves side by side with the students. But unlike the students, the workers never directly confronted the police."

And what did Mario think about the student demonstrations at the time?

"I've got a sister and two brothers who are students. I was with them all the way. But the mood wasn't to go out and support the students, although there was plenty of sympathy, even admiration. What guts those kids have, they'd say, when the students fought in the streets with the police. But when the students passed out leaflets at the factory gates, they just listened. The workers didn't see it as their own struggle. That was the problem.

"In 1964 I went to work for Kaiser as the lowest level employee. But since I had experience, from the university, I got a lot of promotions. In a couple of years, they had given me a title and more than doubled my salary."

When Mario was fired last month for "lack of collaboration amounting to a conspiracy against the firm," he was making $190 a month. This is 20% more than the average pay for workers on the production line, who are among the best paid of Argentine workers. Mario admits that he is better off than most of the others who work for Kaiser. He owns a house and a car, for instance, a rarity among Argentines.

Mario wasn't political when he went to work for Kaiser. I asked him how the process began.

"In '66 there was an accident with one of the giant metal presses. It didn't function right. There had been I don't know how many denunciations by the union. Usually the worker could hear when the press didn't engage and jump out of the way. But on the night shift the guys are tired. One night this poor guy didn't hear the machine, or didn't react fast enough. He was totally mangled.

"The workers struck the next day. I was so burnt up mad I took out the six white collar people in my charge. We were the only ones to go out. They took away my title of supervisor. I wasn't a person they could trust anymore. I began organizing the white collar workers.

I asked him if white collar workers are better paid than production-line workers.

"Slightly better. They live off the struggle of the workers. They get raises based on the raises given to workers who have given their souls fighting for the benefits they finally win. But that slight difference is beginning to mean less and less. Fifty percent of the employees went out during the last strike."

Then Mario described the events that triggered the May uprising:

"The police were used to beating up on the students, but on the 14th of May the Mechanics Union of Kaiser had a meeting in the stadium to discuss the general strike declared for the 29th and 30th. The police said the meeting was not authorized. We went ahead with it anyway. About halfway through, the police arrived and gave the order to cease and disperse. We decided to stay and finish our meeting.

"We were almost finished when they began to lob gas grenades into the stadium. Everyone headed for the only door that was open, and there waiting outside were cops on horseback swinging their clubs and sabres, wading into the people.

"We ran for wherever we could, ran into more gas, finally made it out to the main avenue and there was another line of cops just waiting. Thirty or forty of us ran right over them, and when we got clear on the other side we had the good fortune of finding a quantity of loose tiles and bricks along the sidewalk. But the way they had attacked us while we were in a meeting! Defenseless!

"When the tiles started to fly the cops began shooting. A worker was wounded. We turned over a police bus, broke windows. It turned into a general melee. We had come out of the stadium very angry because of the way they had treated us. That was what started it. At the same time, a few days before, the government had approved a law reducing salaries by 10%. There were also demonstrations about the same time in Rosario and Corrientes.

"On the 29th we went to work. At ten in the morning we abandoned the factories. Instead of meeting all together in the center, each plant held a meeting at the gate and from there went marching toward the center of town, in our case three miles away. The gassing and trouble began about 10:30 in the center. We were not even halfway there.

"As we marched along workers from shops along the way joined the column. They were not ready to go into the streets themselves. But they saw us coming 8,000 strong. They knew we fight, and they joined up. The police intercepted us outside the center of the city.

"We were walking slow and we slowed down even more to see what they were going to do. When they started throwing gas, we didn't stop. They aimed the gas projectiles point-blank and hit two companeros in the head. When the people saw the wounded, the blood in the street, they got angry and picked up speed, and we walked right over the police.

"There were 100 of them and ten thousand of us and we just walked through and over them. But then downtown we turned a corner and there were reinforcements, gendarmes, cadets from the aviation school, and state police.

"The police killed a worker. Then the people broke rank and headed for the center, landing on cops, stores, everything vaguely identified with the enemy. People formed small groups -- friends, people you worked with, it just happened naturally. You ran, turned over signs, busted windows. Then later, although you lost your friends, you'd find a partner anywhere. You'd see a group of 20 or 30 from another factory, you'd recognize them, that they were with you, because they were all sweaty and their eyes teary and burning from the gas.

"It went on like that all day. You didn't ask what factory or school or anything like that. Just here, pal, help me turn over this police car."

On that first day, it was mainly students and workers. But Mario recalls one incident of other people participating:

"At one point, a bunch of us got trapped in a narrow street with cops lined up at both ends. Suddenly a door opened, we saw a pair of hands push out a big rubbish can full of rocks and broken tiles. And then the hands zipped back inside and the door closed. With the fresh supply of ammunition we headed for the weak end, where there were only a few cops and ran over them. There's a photograph famous here, of police on horseback with guns drawn being chased down the steet by people with rocks and sticks.

"The people held the city for a good four hours. The army arrived at five in the afternoon, tanks, armored cars, heavy arms, and they were shooting to kill. (The official figure was 16 dead, but the number was probably twice that. All but two of the victims were civilians.)

"But when the students and workers retreated from the center of the city, they didn't go home to their houses. They went into the working-class and poor neighborhoods where they had support and occupied them, set up barricades, cut the power and offered armed resistance against army patrols that tried to penetrate the area. Other neighborhoods better organized took the local police stations and burned them down. Police cars, foreign companies like Citroen, IBM and Xerox were burned.

"There was a gigantic circus tent right in the middle of town, highly inflammable. But the circus is a meeting place for the people and it wasn't touched, though everything around it, practically, was burned down. In spite of what the government says, the people were not completely out of control."

I asked Mario what people had learned from this experience, and what he expects now.

"After the Cordobazo people think that if with sticks and rocks you could paralyze the city for three days, what would happen if everyone had their little revolver. The military doesn't understand what happened, and the repression was heavy. The commandant-in-chief came to find the 'leader' who had planned it all. It was all, they said, orchestrated from Cuba!

"In 1970, on the anniversary of the Cordobazo, nine factories were seized. (Four of them American-- Kaiser, Ford, Perkins and Thompson-Ramco.) The companies broke the seizures and fired, at Kaiser alone, more than 500 activists. There were more strikes, occupations, demonstrations, all of which seemed to end in failure for the working-class, at least from an immediate tactical point of view.

"But the upshot is that people see the traditional means of struggle exhausted. They understand that the only solution is their own force. So now what? From this moment on, clandestine unions and armed organizations will proliferate in Cordoba. It's the logical conclusion to everything that's happened here."

-30-

****

February 24 (from the women's calendar) -- 35 women and children beaten and arrested in the Lawrence textile strike of 1912; led by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, the "Bread and Roses" strike involved up to 20,000 women.

Same day, 1952 -- Kathy Mulvihill born.

HANOI:
"IT REALLY CHANGES YOUR PERSPECTIVE"

Willamette Bridge/LIBERATION News Service

Ron Eachus is the student body president of the University of Oregon, where he's a graduate student in business administration. In December he went as a member of the National Student Association delegation sent to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to sign a students peace treaty. He is interviewed by the Willamette Bridge, the underground newspaper in Portland, Oregon.

COULD YOU TALK ABOUT HOW PEOPLE SPEND THEIR TIME, ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FIGHTING AND WORKING AND HOW THEY ARRANGE THAT?

About fighting and working--they look upon fighting, working, and studying all as equally revolutionary acts. They don't have a draft but they actually have to turn down students who want to quit school and go fight because they want people to study, because they really want to develop their science and their technology and their research. So they consider all, revolutionary acts and almost every factory and every collective has its own people's militia that if it is necessary, if planes come over, they've got their guns. In the factory we went to, people were working with their guns on.

YOU MENTIONED IN A TALK THAT THEY DO A LOT OF SINGING.

They sing an awful lot. They've got this unity song and it's nothing like "Star-Spangled Benner". Everybody sings it. It's not their national anthem but every time they're at a gathering, they close by singing the unity song. It blows your mind because the song isn't like a star-spangled-benner-stand-up-straight sort of song. It's a song that everybody claps to, and it's got a really good beat to it. It's really far out--everybody standing up and clapping to this song.

WHAT'S THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEADERS AND THE PEOPLE?

Pham Van Dong is just an amazing person. He goes for walks all the time. He just walks out of the palace and starts strolling down the street.

There's a difference now, of course since Ho Chi Minh died. It's the difference between having the personal deity actually alive and having him dead.

It really is hard for Americans to understand the reverence they've got for a leader like Ho Chi Minh. It's not like they've turned him into a god or anything he wrote is a party line or anything but it is pretty real. He meant a lot to them--the unity and liberation struggle--he put it all together--he and a lot of other people.

There isn't a great distance between the leadership of the country and the people. Plus there's not 40 miles of bureaucracy between them. It's really a different personal relationship between the people and their leaders.

It really makes you feel good to go the North Vietnam and think, well, communism really does all this stuff about the government and the people being one. There's something there, it ain't just rhetoric. It's a real thing. It's really amazing. It really changes your perspective.

I WAS REALLY INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT THE WAY PEOPLE RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER IN FACTORIES.

The factory we visited works in shifts. It's a textile factory. It's got some pretty good equipment. The factory was built by women who got together and pooled their money, and after a year of operation they got their money back. It was maybe 10 kilometers outside of Hanoi. They'd had to abandon it during the time of the intensive bombings. So it hadn't been going that long. It just started operating in the last two years at top speed.

The factory is organized in collectives to provide food between shifts. Part of the people actually work out in the fields and provide food for the others. Some of the people actually live there. Some live out in Hanoi and come out on their bicycles. It's almost a little collective in itself. There's the factory, there's the housing near the factory, and you raise part of the food there.

And they've got day care centers where the children can go for a whole week or a whole month if they want to. Day care centers are provided for out of a welfare fund. When the husband goes to fight, the woman can have assistance if necessary from the youth union out of the factory to rear the home and everything.

The factory's got it'sown medical center and every six months the workers receive a medical check again out of their welfare fund. What happens is the State Trade Ministry gives them a production plan, and they take the plan in front of the workers for approval anddiscussion, and if there are any changes proposed and they're reasonable, they'll be accepted.

The worker also has a say in the welfare funds. The welfare fund is a certain percentage of the monetary value of what is produced out of the production of the factory. And that percentage is also determined in the same way the production goal is, between the workers and the government.

The textiles are distributed to the Trade Ministry. The workers have an opportunity to buy the textile first. Then the textiles are distributed out to the various state stores and that stuff is sold.

If they go above the production level then the percentage gets a little bit higher. If they get below the production level, if they don't meet the goal they set for themselves, then they don't get as much.

It's divided into three budgets. One is to modernize and raise production, the other is to give bonuses to the best workers and the other is for welfare.

There were over 4000 people working at that factory. The factory is really clean. We asked about how they kept it clean, and they told us taking care of the workers is as important as production. And that's the way they look at it. [more]

This was toward the end of the trip and all of this time I'd been trying to figure out exactly why is the U.S. in there. You know, I was thinking just the usual stuff. And after seeing that factory, I began to really understand why the U.S. is in there. It's because it is just totally contradictory to the system that we have. And you can see from their system, from the way it is that it's totally in harmoney with human existence, but it's in total conflict with the current system we have.

This was the end of the trip and I'd been trying to figure it out andI could see it in reality exactly why we're there. We just can't afford to let that kind of thing happen. We can't afford to have internal revolution in countries where it'll nationalize the factories of all those workers we'd been exploiting. We just can't have that.

-30-

****

HARRISBURG 6 ARRAIGNED FOR CONSPIRACY
TO KIDNAP KISSINGER & BLOW UP WASH. D.C.

LIBERATION News Service

HARRISBURG, Pa (LNS)--The Harrisburg 6 were arraigned here on February 6 for conspiring with 7 co-conspirators "and with others whose names are not known to the Grand Jury" to blow up the heating system of Federal buildings in Washington, D.C., and to kidnap presidential advisor Henry Kissinger. All six defendants separately pleaded "not guilty" to the charges.

One of the Harrisburg 6, Father Philip Berrigan was brought from Conneticut's Danbury State Prison to Pennsylvania for the arraignment. Both Father Philip and his brother Father Daniel, who is named as one of the seven co-conspirators, are in prison for burning draft records with napalm at the Catonsville, Md., draft board in 1968.

Since their arrest on January 12, the six defendants have been released on high bails and their travel has been restricted. All of the defendants were immediately struck from Father Phil's visitors' list at Danbury Prison.

The Grand Jury which brought down these indictments can legally meet for another 18 months. They can even continue to implicate other people in the Kissinger-kidnap "conspiracy" throughout the trial, naming those "others whose names are not known."

Funds and support are urgently needed now. Information regarding the status of the case, the defendants' schedules, and support and fund-raising efforts may be obtained from The Defense Committee, 241 E. 116th St., New York, N.Y., 10029. Or call (212) 687-4878 or (212) 348-5622.

-30-

WHEN THE "JURY QUALIFYING DEPARTMENT" CALLS,
MUM'S DA VOID

LIBERATION News Service

NEW YORK (LNS)--People in a number of movement groups in New York have been getting phone calls from a man saying he is from the "Jury Qualifying Department of the New York Municipal Courts" and asking all sort of questions. Funny thing about New York--though--there's no such thing as the Jury Qualifying Department and the Jury Commissioner who authorizes jury selection sends out post cards which you are asked to reply to.

The people who have been called are generally convinced that the phone calls are under the direction of one of the many national and local surveillance and left-watching agencies (F.B.I.,Red Squad, etc.) "How did they know to call me when I'm not even an official New York resident or voter," said one movement person who just returned from a long trip outside the country.

The questions that have been asked are: "Where are you living?", "Where did you last live?", and "Where do you work?". One woman called is a resident alien. Parents who live at a different address than their son were called and asked what does he do that he is never home. When a wife said her husband was unemployed, she was asked where her husband wask looking for work.

And remember folks, next time a slimy voice starts asking questions, mum's the word.

-30-

++

NEW NACLA BOOKLET AVAILABLE

LIBERATION News Service

U.S. Military and Police Operations in the Third World is a new publication by the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) designed to serve as a basic guide to U.S. overseas bases and forces, military and police assistance programs, training and advisory activities, and arms transfers.

A list of all U.S. military bases in the Third World is provided as well as country-by country breakdowns of assistance and training programs.

The pamphlet includes essays on U.S. military involvement in Latin America as well as a list of all U.S. military interventions abroad from 1789 to 1945. Copies are available from both East and West coast offices of NACLA: P.O. Box 57, Cathedral Station, New York, N.Y., 10025 and P.O. Box 226, Berkeley, California, 94701. Single copies cost 50¢ each plus 15¢ postage. Bulk rates are: 10-99 copies, 30¢ each, 100 or more copies, 25¢ each.

-30-

++

DANISH WORKING WOMEN DEMAND EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

COPENHAGEN (LNS)--Five thousand working women, their supporters from Rodstropmer--Danish women's liberation, and some friendly men gathered to demand equal pay for men and women doing the same jobs. They marched with torches, banners, and a brass band to the building where contract negotiations were being held. People planned to strike if labor leaders did not stick to the demand of equal pay. Two days later, came a partial victory--50% of the wage lag would be made up this year and the rest in 1973.

-30

[Note to editors: See graphics section for material to accompany this letter]

"NO HEROES, NO RHETORIC...WE NEED WHOLE FAMILIES": A LETTER FROM BOBBY SEALE AND ERICKA HUGGINS

LIBERATION News Service

(Editor's note: Bobby Seale and Ericka Huggins, Black Panthers on trial for their lives in New Haven, sent a message to the hundreds of anti-war organizers who gathered in Ann Arbor in early February to make plans for a People's Peace Treaty with the Vietnamese.

John Froines, who was once a co-defendant of Bobby's in the Chicago Conspiracy trial, read the message to an attentive crowd of 1500 people at the University of Michigan's Hill Auditorium. (The message sounds best if you read it aloud, since that's the way it was composed.)

To make this racist railroading trial of Sister Ericka and myself a focal point to further educate the people, massive demonstrations should occur around the end of the trial. There must also be teach-ins of people's revolutionary ideology--on inter-communalism and the work that political prisoners do and did before being incarcerated.

Ericka and I feel that the demonstrations at the end of our trial should mark a massive national beginning of a struggle to free all political prisoners and prisoners of war throughout the country.

We must educate the people more broadly about the people's revolutionary movement, and about the people's struggle to end war, racism and repression. Of course, we revolutionary, peace-loving people who want to end war, racism and repression know the general outlines of what we must attempt to do to help make a peace-loving society and world. We must make more widely known what we believe in for the people, all the people, beyond our beautiful rhetoric of "All Power to the People."

The youth in America with their peace-loving states of mind and a loving will to see that all forms of exploitation, oppression, war and racism end--really are America. Humane people. The other is Amerikkka...an American nightmore, not the "American Dream."

The American Dream is for world peace and an end to oppression and racism; this American Dream lies buried within the 60% of the population under 30 years of age (Oh, I'm not 34 years old! Being on death row right now and looking back on the ten years I've been in the struggle, I feel like a new born adolescent with vigor and love for the people in the whole world.)

I saw on the eleven o'clock news where Sister Angela Davis has beautifully taken the position of defending herself with the assistance of fine lawyers. That is right, right, right on time! She's out of sight. Beautiful, full womanhood, revolutionary mind, heart and soul. It seems like it might be summer before that fascist railroad starts.

I'm going to sleep now I need some sleep and mind rest repair, the nightly adjustments and other myseterious functions that go on while we sleep. We still don't know much about it...

Good morning. I'm in the lock-up now at court, waiting to go in and pick a jury (???) Regular communications to Ericka and me would be good. We do feel that we have some significant things to say with respect to rallying and mobilizing the people around political prisoners.

Bobby (Sister Ericka has something to say)

Bobby's said what's important; educating the people about all political prisoners of our war against oppression. No heroes, no rhetoric, but massive educational rallies and street politicizing showing how POW's are examples of the situation every one of us face.

And we have to do it with love, you know, and the understanding that we need more than just movement people and sympathizers at these rallies. We need whole families of people. Young, old, black, brown, red, yellow, beige, whatever. Male, female, gay--everybody. Because everybody is faced with Amerikan oppression and all of us are the America that will be, you dig it? So we all really have to get to work and focus on the people, not individuals.

Love, Power, Strength--Ericka

-30-

****

RIP OUT THE PHONE TAPS, THERE'S NO LAW SAYS YOU CAN'T!

LIBERATION News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.(LNS)--There is no law prohibiting the detection and removal of phone taps, regardless of their so-called legality. "The vast majority of phone taps are planted without court approval anyhow," according to the Counter-Spy Committee, a group of electronic technicians and lawyers in Washington, D.C. who provide free detection and removal service to people and groups being tapped but unable to pay for professional detection services.

The committee has a display of devices recently uncovered in and near the homes and offices of several Washington area government employees, students and political activists. The counter-spies found one elaborate device plugged into regular phone company equipment near the home of a woman school teacher who had participated in a few marches. The device was a near duplicate of the equipment which should have been there, except that it also served as a powerful radio transmitter.

The Counter-Spy Committee is looking in other major cities for people with some knowledge of electronics who would like to be trained and given equipment to detect taps by the D.C. committee. The D.C. committee will send fully equipped teams of technicians to remove devices when local sleuths discover them. Money is urgently needed for travel expenses and equipment upkeep.

Contributors, volunteers and persons wanting further information should write to: The Counter-Spy Committee, 1402 New York Ave., Washington, D.C. 20005

-30-

TENNESSEE WOMAN

LIBERATION News Service

(Editor's Note: After seven years of marriage, Sherri Myers, a poor-white Tennessee woman, left her husband in February 1970. He sued for divorce and custody of their child Miriam claiming Sherri was an unfit mother and wife.

As grounds for a divorce he cited Sherri's women's liberation activities, claimed she hated all men, and stated she "consorted around town with men of the Negro race." Moreover, he argues that Sherri denied him his sexual rights and didn't want to execute other wifely duties.

Sherri filed a counter divorce suit called a cross bill. She demanded divorce, child custody, and alimony for unpaid back wages as a domestic drudge. Her husband's attorney immediately entered a motion asking the court to strike out her petition as irrelevant. A date for the hearing has not yet been set.

The following is a summary of the cross bill. The entire bill appears in the February 3-20 edition of The Rat.)

NASHVILLE, Tenn.(LNS)--She was born June 16, 1942, the illegitimate child of Pearl Weaver. From her own experiences she learned that when a bastard child is born, both the mother's and the child's lots are clearly defined. They are outlaws and are punished socially and economically -- deprived of basic rights.

Her mother was forced into unskilled, low-paying, non-unionized work, washing glassware for the U.S. Public Health Service for fifteen years, and for fifteen years her income was inadequate to feed, clothe and shelter a family of three. Therefore, she also worked as a waitress at night. Half of this income was spent on day care for the two youngest children.

Sherri Myer's earliest childhood memories were of moving from one old, cold tin-roofed, splintery floored shack to another; of going to school hungry with cardboard soles in her shoes to keep the ground from soaking through; of searching for empty soft drink bottles to sell to get money to buy a quart of milk or loaf of bread; of breaking out in boils resulting from malnutrition and iron deficiency; of living two and three days at a time in bitter cold weather buried under all the available blankets because the gas company had turned the heat off in the dead of winter when there was no money to pay the utility bill; of being constantly harassed and assaulted by men who considered her mother and her easy prey; of hearing school mates frequently call her mother a whore because they had learned from their parents that she was not married; of being constantly subjected to police harassment simply because they were "poor white trash"; of being publicly berated before grade school classmates by teachers who paraded her before the class asking her aloud why she did not know her father's name.

Sherri's mother was finally able to send her to private school in Valdosta, Georgia, from funds furnished by two church organizations.

At that school, for the first time in her life, Sherri got to know upper middle-class people. They liked her because they felt that she had upper-middle class potential. They told her that she was an exceptional female and an exceptional "poor white"--for she had intelligence, ambition and "style." They added that with the right kind of education she could succeed and be accepted in middle class society.

She alleges she was a victim of this "myth." When she graduated from high school she had accepted without question their values. She eagerly accepted the opportunity to go to David Lipscomb College in Nashville, which is a Church of Christ College.

She was later expelled from David Lipscomb for committing the "unladylike" act of smoking a cigar in her dorm room. In the fall of 1961 she enrolled at George Peabody College for Teachers.

In order to stay at Peabody she had to get a job. The church had cut off much of her scholarship after her expulsion from Peabody. After several unsuccessful attempts at landing a job, she finally managed to find work as a model. One of these modeling assignments took her to the Harris School of Art and it was there that she met the complainant (her husband), John Myers, who was then the school's student instructor.

Within a matter of months an intimate relationship developed and to her horror, in July of 1962, Sherri discovered she was pregnant. Child hood experiences had taught her the social and economic penalties imposed on women snared in this situation and she soon began to experience a sense of self-revulsion.

First she tried to get an abortion, but she couldn't raise the $250 charged by a local doctor. Then she tried to abort herself, but succeeded in making herself nearly fatally ill. Sherri had to resign herself to giving birth to the child.

For the first five months of her pregnancy she attended classes at Peabody, worked at Sears, and as a cocktail waitress in a night club.

But she couldn't keep up the pace. Her health was deteriorating and her grades were plunging. She was fired from Sears when they learned she was pregnant and unmarried. So five months pregnant and broke, Sherri moved in with her mother who was then waitressing.

As a last rest she agreed to marry John Myers in December 1963. She did the housekeeping, cooking, and cleaning; bathed, fed, changed, and loved the baby. Her husband refused to share the chores of child care, complaining that he felt nauseous when asked to change diapers.

When Miriam was three months old Sherri went back to school and her mother moved in and took over the child care and housekeeping responsibilities. John Myers never paid her for this work; he only gave her room and board. After graduating from Peabody, Sherri returned to full-time house work and childrearing. John refused to pay her for the work, and forced her to request money from him and to account in detail how she spent it. Throughout the seven years of their marriage, he showed

no interest in Miriam. He only supported her financially. All affection was given to her by her mother and grandmother.

In his suit, John Myers claims that *"the defendant denied the complainant his sexual rights as a husband. Fearing pregnancy, the defendant nevertheless refused to use birth control devices and frustrated and tormented the complainant by throwing him off before he could receive any sexual gratification whatever."*

In fact, Sherri spent three years on the pill and stopped taking it only after it wrecked her menstrual cycle and she became aware of its dangerous side effects. Moreover, after that she tried six times for a successful insertion of the I.U.D., but suffered severe cramps and infection. Throughout all this, John expected his "sexual rights" and refused to use contraceptives himself. Nor did he show concern for Sherri's sexual gratification.

On innumerable occasions, she urged him to work with her to solve their problems. Such attempts always resulted in physical violence and name-calling on his part. Before she left him Sherri made one last effort to make him aware of the unequal division of labor in their home. She stopped washing dishes. For two weeks, dishes piled up in the kitchen sink. He demanded they eat in restaurants, and when that became too expensive said that he would never wash dishes. He bought a new diswashing machine. Sherri was supposed to be happy about her promotion from dishwasher to dishloader.

After Sherri left her husband she saw Miriam every day and nearly every weekend until he filed for a divorce and won temporary custody. She did not desert their daughter as John claims. For three years before that, she had requested a divorce herself, but John always threatened to take Miriam away from her.

In his bill John claims Sherri was unfit to raise their female child because she questioned the socialization young female children receive in this society. She cited in the cross bill the kind of literature John reads. In his studio can be found *such pornography as Cloud 9, Man and Playboy magazines containing detailed, close-up photographs of the female vagina, photos showing women in various acts of sickening sexual perversion, photos showing men sadistically brutalizing women into sexual submission.*

He contends in his divorce bill that "the defendant has attempted to indoctrinate her child with her own weird beliefs and practices by keeping her home from school on those two or three occasions when she has had Miriam stay with her since February 1970, telling her that the educational system was teaching 'domestic slavery to little girls.'"

In the cross bill Sherri describes the textbook, Tip and Mitten published by Houghton Mifflin Co., used in Miriam's first grade classroom, located in a primarily black community. There are no black people in the book. The little girl wears a frilly dress and plays with dolls and tea cups. The woman in the book is a mother and cook. She sometimes shops or helps kids find lost pets.

In a letter she sent to The Rat asking that her cross bill be published in their paper she explained the purpose for her case.

Because of my long association with the civil rights, anti-war, and women's liberation movements, and because of my fights with the local administration over land-grabbing urban renewal programs, the complainant (her husband) believes and I agree with him, that the courts will be naturally prejudiced against me. I have never thought for a moment that I can win custody of my child in courts which reflect the racial, male chauvinist, and political prejudices of this society. However, for myself, my daughter, and all women, I feel that it is my revolutionary duty to deal with the institutions which have legalized our oppression.
(ITALICIZED PARTS ARE EXCERPTS FROM THE ORIGINAL BILL)

**********-30-**********

"VICTIM OF SOCIETY" SENTENCED TO 32 YEARS

LIBERATION News Service

SAULTE STE. MARIE, Ontario(LNS)--Herbert Sinobert, a 27 year old Indian who has spent most of the last 10 years in prison, has just been sentenced to 32 years in the penitentiary on 16 charges of break, entry and theft.

Sinobert, who defended himself in court, spoke for 15 minutes about his life.

One of eight children who lost both parents when he was a child, Sinobert grew up on the Sagamok Indian reserve in Ontario. He had to quit school in grade 6, but despite this he earned a BA degree in prison. But he told the court he felt the degree was worthless to him. He could only hold a job for one or two months, before the employer would learn of his record and dismiss him.

Sinobert told the court he had tried to commit suicide several times during previous prison sentences and said that "if I go back I know I'll do it."

In passing sentence, Judge James Greco said that the prisoner had admitted "that he cannot live in this society. Therefore, he must be removed from society for as long as possible." Greco described Sinobert as "a one-man crime wave and a habitual criminal dedicated to a life of crime."

The majority of the 16 charges against Sinobert were of breaking and entering summer cottages in the area.

The Judge explained that he had to protect society and that there was no one in the court who sympathized more with the plight of the Indian than he did. "But I must do my duty," he said. Then he recommended psychiatric treatment for the prisoner.

"I've been through all that before," Sinobert quietly replied. "They never were of any help to me."

-30-

(Thanks to Canadian University Press.)

****

NO MORE WELFARE FOR TRANSVESTITES

by Angela Keyes Douglas

L.A. Free Press/LIBERATION News Service

LOS ANGELES(LNS)--An official of the Department of Public Social Services has directed that all forms of welfare assistance be cut off for transvestites or men wearing feminine attire. This also cuts off aid to male transsexuals although transsexuals were not actually mentioned in the directive.

The directive was issued by Joseph L. Winkler, Chief, Division II, D.P.S.S. in Los Angeles . Winkler's directive is as follows:

"A few days ago while at the UMC (Unattached Men's Center) I observed two apparent females present with a large group of men in a group interview. The explanation given me was that the two in question were transvestites and the program staff had been advised some time ago that they were to be served as unattached men at the center. While we were discussing the subject, another person garbed as a female passed by in the lobby and I was told that this was another alleged male. It was estimated that about 20 other such persons had been aided at UMC.

"I regret that this matter was not made known to me sooner. I am convinced that female impersonators should not be aided at UMC for the following reasons.

"1. These persons have a fertile field at the Center for prospective partners in homosexual activities. We have had enough of that kind of trouble at UMC.

2. They are objects of curiosity and the brunt of ridicule and abuse not infrequently on the part of clientele.

3. If they are indeed males it is unthinkable that they should use the ladies' restroom. On the other hand, the consequences of their use of the men's room is equally abhorrent.

4. If the present practice continues, what would prevent genuine females from representing themselves as male transvestites and becoming eligible for aid at UMC? Who would be responsible if the word gets out UMC will aid all persons in female attire claiming to be men, and at some later date it should be actually be discovered that half of them really were women? How do we verify sex without physical examination?

"General Relief regulations stipulate that employable applicants shall be available for employment. Obviously males attired as females have voluntarily severely limited their employment potential. For example, I have learned belatedly that LAC-USC rejects any such assignees to the Beautification Project. What is to prevent other men from donning female garb to avoid assignments to work projects? Anyone can claim to be a transvestite."

A great number of outraged social workers brought the directive to the attention of the Transvestite/Transsexual Action Organization (TAO) and Gay Liberation Front Los Angeles. The social workers, who are not gay, demanded that GLF and TAO take some action.

The social workers themselves plan action of some kind, calling the directive "monstrous, totally beyond belief, a fascist document," and "repressive." Homosexual males fear that they may be next, that anyone suspected of being homosexual will be denied welfare assistance.

-30-

****

CITIZENS BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO HUNGER & MALNUTRITION FINDS PLENTY OF BOTH

LIBERATION News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.(LNS)--"We make the poor fight, clutch and claw for everything they can get," said Leslie Dunbar, summing up the findings of a Citizens Board of Inquiry into Hunger and Malnutrtion.

The Board of Inquiry was addressed by welfare and food stamp recipients from 12 states who testified to "a pattern of official lawlessness, at that point where government comes most into contact with poor people."

Mrs. Geraldine Decker, an Indian mother from Reno, Nev., broke into tears as she spoke about "unnecessary and degrading questions" asked by state and local officials. "It's not enough to say, "my husband left me and I need help," she said sobbing.

"When women try to work a little bit to get more money for food for their children because they don't get enough welfare, they are cut off what welfare they get and called cheaters." Nevada recently reduced its welfare payments sharply.

The National Welfare Rights Organization stressed that President Nixon's "revolutionary" welfare reform and revenue-sharing proposals would do little to help this situation beyond increasing the authority of these same state and local officials whose callousness already magnifies the problems of welfare recipients.

However, the inquiry revealed that there are some people who are benefitting from the welfare system. In Collier County, Fla., migrants now receive food stamps. "But during the migrant season, the price of a quart of milk jumps from 30 to 40 cents," said Michael McQuire, an anti-poverty lawyer.

"There has been a significant reduction in hunger," he went on, sarcastically. "At least I can't name a single hungry store owner or farmer."

-30-

****

CAMBODIAN PUPPETS GIVE U.S. EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS AID

LIBERATION News Service

PARIS(LNS)--The Cambodian government in Pnom Penh holding in through the grace of $250 million in American aid has demonstrated a new way of funneling aid to American cities.

In a cable to Secretary of State Rogers, Cambodia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced a donation of $2000 to victims of the L.A. earthquake.

-30-

WOMEN AND THE U.S. WAR MACHINE

by Marilyn Alpert

LIBERATION News Service

(Editor's note: this article appeared in a longer version in WIN, a New York radical magazine. For a copy, write to 339 Lafayette St., New York, New York 10012.)

Women's conditioned passivity is part of the general passivity that permits the war to go on, but with passivity in women has come sympathy and compassion. Seventy-four percent of American women when polled said they would not have obeyed orders at Mylai as opposed to 21 percent of American men.

To say that centuries of socialization have dehumanized men and cultivated more human qualities in women is not to fall into myths of sex stereotypes -- it is simply to recognize that we are very deeply conditioned. We must rebel against traditional notions of femininity, but at the same time retain and strengthen those qualities which enable us to identify and struggle with oppressed peoples.

In recent years of the Vietnam war, people in every walk of life have felt the pinch of the war economically. By definition, a ruling class oppresses people under its domestic thumb, and must doubly oppress them when it is exploiting people in the Third World as well -- in order to meet rising military expenditures and to stifle resistance to the war.

The contracting labor market brought about by war-caused inflation and recession does not provide enough work and unemployment is at a peak. Wages do not rise in proportion to the rising livingcost, and prices creep steadily upward -- a fact that is particularly evident to the budget-minded housewife.

More and more women are being forced to go on welfare -- as welfare, childcare and anti-poverty programs are cut back to re-allocate money for the war. The guaranteed annual income demand of the National Welfare Rights Organization of $5500 per year is spent every three seconds in Vietnam, while Nixon's proposed welfare allotment for a family of four is $1600.

Poor women have been the primary victims of the birth and population control programs sponsored or subsidized by the U.S. government and its agencies. Those programs, both within the United States and throughout the Third World countries under U.S. domination or influence, are another aspect of genocide and imperialism.

The women's liberation demand for control of our bodies and the recent ecological consciousness have been distorted and co-opted into a devastating population control program all over the world which, rather than permitting people greater control over their lives, usurps that control completely. Poor women have been the guinea pigs for birth and population control methods. The first tests done on the Pill were on women of Puerto Rico, Haiti, and areas of Appalachia.

The U.S. sponsors and subsidizes similar population control programs internationally. Groups like the Peace Corps, International Planned Parenthood, and Agency for International Development run international population control programs under the guise of solving the problems of poverty caused by overpopulation, but really for the purpose of curbing growth of Third World, potentially revolutionary populations, and for control of the land and resources in those countries. We must clarify our demands for control of our bodies and intensify the fight so that such genocidal policies cannot be adopted in our name and in the name of "saving the world from overpopulation."

The United States government and the Saigon regime have devised a specific method of warfare against women, designed to break morale, terrorize, and induce physical and moral decay throughout South Vietnam, thereby weakening the growing resistance there. Rape and other crimes against women are common and are encouraged by the U.S. command, which distributes "True Adventure" type pornography to all enlisted men's quarters. The Saigon government admitted to 36 daylight rapes in the Saigon streets in 1969. Once can only imagine what the real figures must be to force such an admission.

In January 1969, two GIs arrested and raped a waitress in a Saigon hotel, leaving a bottle of champagne rammed into her vagina. In April 1970, 12 waitresses in that same hotel went on strike for protection of their dignity against rape. The Committee to Defend the Dignity and Virtue of Vietnamese Women, which for two years functioned to educate and assist Vietnamese women with widespread results (even among ARVN officers whose wives were forced to prostitution while they were at the front), was eventually outlawed by the government.

The current Committee to Defend the Right to Live is the major women's anti-Thieu-Ky-Khiem organization, and is a strong force in the South Vietnamese resistance movement. The prostitution rate in South Vietnam is 400,000 -- one for every GI!

It is absolutely vital that American women use the power we have as women by following the example of our Vietnamese sisters and resisting the war at every level. Wherever we are, we can find some way to relate the war to our lives and to the lives of women around us and to organize around that.

There is a wide range of activities being organized in the women's movement around the war. Women are opening health clinics and naming them after Madame Binh of the PRG and opening tax counseling centers in their communities. Several women's groups will be circulating drafts of the People's Peace Treaty which specifically relate women to the war as part of a sustained effort to educate people about the war and move to stop it.

For more info about women's anti-imperialist activity, contact: The New York Committee to Defend the Right to Live, 2nd floor, 5 W. 21st st., NY 10010.

-30-

"WHAT AM I DOING WITH A GUN AND A UNIFORM?"
A CONSCRIPTED SOLDIER IN SOUTH VIETNAM
TELLS HIS STORY

by Thu Van

LIBERATION News Service

(Editor's note: the following article comes from a leaflet distributed at the Winter Soldier's tribunal in Detroit. At the tribunal, many GI's testified about the atrocities they had witnessed and participated in while in South Vietnam. Here, for the first time, we have the story from a South Vietnamese soldier, conscripted by the Saigon government to fight -- along with American GIs -- against the NLF.)

TAN HOA, South Vietnam (LNS) -- As far back as I can remember, there has always been some kind of war going on in my country. When I reached draft age at the beginning of 1966, village authorities summoned me and put me in the army. I never had any taste for war. I abhorred killing.

The sight of blood made me sick. As a child I trembled violently as if with malaria when I was ordered to kill a chicken -- applying the sharpened knife to the animal's neck, and sawing back and forth. Blood squirted out like a fountain! That blood followed me all day, it's nauseous smell on my hands. I saw red everywhere. I couldn't eat chicken. I had begged my mother, "Don't kill the chicken, mother. Let her lay eggs and we'll eat the eggs."

At the Quang-Trung Training Center they put a gun into my hands and taught me how to kill. I was first sent to Phy-Cuong, northwest of Saigon. I was put in a position "*kill or be killed,*" so I killed in order not to be killed.

For each of us in the platoon, only the preservation of his own life mattered. For me, the chicken, the brother blood, the Buddha teachings, the long nose foreigner, the red devil -- no longer meant a damn thing. I was twenty. I wanted to live and would shoot anybody in order to live.

My hands no longer trembled. I became a very good soldier. My courage astounded me. I knew now the secret: put a man in the position of killing or being killed and the most blood-shy will become a good soldier. And once his hands are stained with VC blood, he'd have to go all the way. I felt that all of our rulers knew that. That's why I was sent to Phu-Cuong first -- to get my hands stained.

Soon, I came to realize that the other guy, the VC, who could well have been me, is also put in the same position by his leaders: "kill or be killed." He had to kill me in order not to be killed by me. By that time our platoon was transferred to the Mekong Delta.

There seemed to be some kind of tacit agreement between the VC and us. "*We won't kill you, so you don't have to kill us. Live and let live. You go your way and I go mine. Each of us has a duty to do -- so let's do it. We won't bother you and you won't bother us.*"

We tried to avoid them and they tried to avoid us. If we happened to run into each other, we fired some shots for a show and when the show was over each of us went our way. Our sergeant was a very understanding man. The VC sometimes passed near our post. We sent a red balloon or a flare bomb in the air -- our way to say 'hello' to get credit for our silence. In exchange, our men went shopping in the village market unbothered. And we slept well at night.

Our superior officers in the district province headquarters were well satisfied with our performances: for months, there were no VC attacks in our area. The village was listed as "pacified" on the Saigon map, and as "liberated" on the VC map and as a "compromise" in our minds. Everybody was happy.

From time to time, my mother's letters reached me. I would have liked to go home for a visit, but could not get permission, although our village had been raided several times. One day a letter came from mother, dictated as usual to my sister:

"O my son, what ill fortune has fallen upon our family. Our house was burned. For a week we have been in a refugee camp without a roof. It's called Binah Hoa, 'peace and tranquility'-- all sand and sun. We have had a hard time trying to get an envelope and stamp to send this letter off to you, for we are kind of prisoners. But thank heaven we're still alive and together.

"We were in bed one night when bombs and shells thundered above our heads. We scrambled into the bunker you built for us before you left, underneath the wooden bed. We had heard bombs and shells before, but this time it was like the whole sky collapsing, smashing everything. The earth was trembling like an earthquake.

"O God, our house was burning. We smelled the smoke from the bunker. Fortunately your sisters and I had dug an outlet into the garden. Then we saw the whole hamlet aflame. One chopper went down at the edge of the village. The sky was filled with flying machines spitting fire and death. My dear son, I've never seen hell, but I got a fair idea of it that day. I prayed the Lord Buddha to help us, but I mixed up all the prayers.

"Your sisters wanted to get into the house to save your father's incense bowl at least. They wanted to take water from the well and put out the fire. With both hands I held them. We smelled the roasted rice and sweet potatoes we had just harvested and didn't have time to bring down into the bunker.

"'Get out of the bunkers, everybody,' said the loudspeaker. 'Whoever is found in a bunker is a VC. We're going to throw grenades into the bunkers.' At this point, the three of us got out. We lay in the ditch, watching our house crumbling down with all our belongings.

"'But we'renot VC, mother,' said your sisters. 'Our brother is in the army.'

"'There must be some error.' I told them. 'We'll make a claim to the authorities.'

"Our neighbor's son, Ban, was badly hit when he ran away. He lay screaming in front of our house. Chi Ba was badly burned trying to save her pigs. Great Aunt An and her five grandchildren were in the bunker when a grenade was dropped in. She was deaf from a previous bombing and couldn't hear the order.

"Many people were shot when they ran away. They're not VC you know, but they ran for their lives.

Which really meant for their deaths. Anyone who doesn't know the rules of this war pays for it with their life.

"I always admonished your sisters. Never never flee when Americans shoot at random. Just pretend you don't see them. Continue what you're doing. If they are too near, lie down; if they come to you, join your palms together in prayer and show them your ID card. That they understand, even if they don't understand what you say.

"I was so afraid of their being raped that I sent them to the city of Hue for many months to work as maids in some rich houses. They just came home last month to help me with the crops. Things seemed quieter, but no one could tell. All of the other girls had fled to the mountains which are full of tigers -- but no one seems to fear the tigers anymore.

"The soldiers took everything they didn't burn. Watching them, I wondered if I had been right in urging you to join them, or if the VC were all wrong. The Nationals are supposed to defend us, but they are destroying us. As for the true VC, they always know when the Americans were coming, so they never got caught. Even your sister, Mai, said, 'I wonder if the Americans are fighting the VC or us. No wonder so many join the VC. I wish I had something to defend myself with.'

"The loudspaker said, in a curious rusty voice, that our village had been punished for entertaining the VC. It told us we would be taken away for interrogation, and also that we were going to begin a new life free from VC terrorism. After the bombs and the fire, leaflets rained down like butterflies. People wished they could feed or clothe themselves with them.

"At dawn we were led to the choppers. They didn't put black sandbags upon our heads as they did with many others. A young soldier about your age escorted us. I told him you were in the army. He laughed and said, 'All of you say that, but we'll find it our ourselves. If you're not pro-VC, why didn't you report them to the authorities?'

I showed him your picture in uniform and he said the authorities would see to it that I don't have to worry. But it takes time for them to see to it, believe me. We have been here a week and they have done nothing. Some have been waiting here over a month.

"All of us are 'detainees.' No one knows why, or what 'detainees' means. We are treated as VC, but as you know the true VC are not here. We sleep in the open. There are so many of us that there apparently is not enough room for everyone. Every day brings in more truckloads of new 'detainees."

We received some blankets and some rice. An old goat, the guard of the camp, tried to rape your sister one night. I wanted to report the incident, but people advised me not to. His daughter is married to a very big American, so he is powerful.

"No day passes without a death in the camp. One woman gave birth on the road. And people keep coming like black ants. We live near a U.S. base, and they bring us left-overs from U.S. canteens, half-empty cans of food. The children throw themselves upon the food like starving wolves.

"The madams come to round up girls for jobs. 'Very good pay,' they said. What kind of job, I asked. Waitresses, bar girls, maids, laundresses for the GIs. Some of the girls go. They dress up like someone going to the office, and say they're going to work, but what kind of work I ask you -- prostitution.

"The woman next to us cries all night. She was on a visit to her mother when the bombing began and her three children may be burned alive, since the eldest was only eight. No one knows their whereabouts. There are many children without parents here.

"Can you ask your captain to write a letter on our behalf to the director of the camp so we may go home? I wish you good health. May the bullets miss you. Your mother.

"Could you ask permission to come here to help us? We are in the camp at Tra Long, five or six kilometers south of Da Nang. Sister Mai."

My viscera is still on fire although the letter is two months old. I don't know if my family is still there. How can I send them money? Where are they now?

Yesterday we went on a search and destroy operation. The Americans put pressure on the top, the top puts pressure on us, and we do the dirty work, so our officers can line their pockets. Our mission was to clean up the area south of the city of Cantho.

There is hardly a night the VC does not send mortar shells into the American air field there. They hate the planes -- understandably. Most of the destruction comes from the air. The countryside is so rotten that we have to clear the hamlet house by house.

My unit served as guides as we moved into the hamlet. Old village women came to us, pleading: "We are just peasants. My husband and sons are in the National army. We're with the government."

I let their words go in one ear and out the other. We took all of them to the choppers. The wind blew the fire from one hut to another. We ordered everybody out -- we had orders to destroy all the bunkers so the VC couldn't use them. Under a rather well-to-do house, someone didn't want to get out. I called several times. I hesitated between a grenade and the machinegun: finally I shot inside. There were children's screams.

I waited a few minutes and then went in. At the end of my flashlight, an old woman and some children, all with greenish blackened faces. I asked them why they didn't get out; they said they didn't dare. I dragged the old woman out of the hole. She didn't want to leave or let the children be taken away, although two of them were wounded.

Probably a VC mother, I thought. I put the gun at her back and walked her to the chopper while the medics took the wounded children away. Suddenly, the woman began to talk to me:

"My son is in the National Army, like you. Mistreating me is like mistreating your own mother. Why kill your own brothers and sisters? Go home and watch the Americans bomb your mother and burn your house. My son is a conscript like you."

She began to search in her inside pocket.

"Do you want to see his picture? I'm going to write to him to tell him to complain to his superiors about this mistake. He was just promoted to sergeant. I'll tell him to come home to protect his family. Those were his children. Their mother went to visit him."

My gun became suddenly heavy. A strange chill went down my spine. I heard my mother's soft voice,

reading her letter aloud:

"Why don't you go home and watch...Why don't you go home to protect...." I felt the greatest fear of my life as a soldier. The eyes of the woman were warm.

"Shut up! Shut up!" I shouted to drown out her voice. "Shut up or I'll widen your mouth to the ears to teach you how to lie."

I was horrified to death. I was no longer able to see in that woman an impersonal tool of the VC, bent on my destruction, but instead, oh horror, a person! Worse, a mother, in so many ways a replica of mine. What have I been doing to all of them?

She continued, tears running down her wrinkled cheeks. In her frighteningly soft voice:

"You were drafted. My son was too. Your mother is worried to death about you, and so am I about my son. We are from one house. You know the saying don't you 'skin pot boiling its own flesh'? We come from the same root; why must we kill each other."

I was struck dumb. In front of us, at the impressive helicopters, tall Americans came and went, talking a language none of us understood. They are herding the people we brought them into the helicopters. A geat sense of shame swept over me. While I am here, pointing my gun at this woman's back, her son may be over there pointing his at my mother's back!

I had a violent attack of nausea. All my childhood fear of blood came back. I put my hands up to my mouth to keep from vomiting. But they stank of the human blood. They looked like two black spiders, completely alien to me. I suddenly understood why a soldier from another unit had chopped off his right hand. We thought he had gone out of his mind. And what about the sergeant in the First Corps who burned himself? What about the monks and nuns who did the same?

After this operation, I fell sick. I vomited until the bile came out and have since, whenever I see or smell blood, I even vomit at the meat in my bowl. At the military hospital, they can't find the cause of my illness. But the doctors say combat will be the best prescription for me. Kill or be killed -- that will cure me. They say they can make good killers even out of monks.

I have been granted two weeks leave for recovery before active duty. I'd like to escape. But where? Everywhere in my country there is killing. First, I went to find my mother. People at the camp said they went back to the village. I returned to Tan-Hoa, but they weren't there.

I looked at the desolate countryside, once so full of children's laughter, at the heap of ashes beside the blackened mud walls, the blue broken pieces of my father's incense bowl, the broken jars where we kept drinking water. In the courtyard were my mother's betel vines, still growing tender green and beautiful. I saw the huge craters in the rice field, and the many heaps of freshly dug earth -- the new tombs. How many of my friends were buried there? Where are all the others?

I looked down at my uniform and something stuck in my throat. What am I doing with a gun and a uniform? What am I pretending to defend when I am unable to defend what is dearest to me?

-30-

[NOTE RE LAST STORY: See cover of LNS #317 for picture of South Vietnamese in bunkers. And look for Vietnamese graphics in back packets to accompany this story.]

****

"WHEN THE PRISON GATES ARE OPENED, THE REAL DRAGON WILL COME OUT"

LIBERATION News Service

NEW YORK, (LNS)--On February 12, a few hours after a Grand Jury disregarded even the testimony of a prison guard and ruled that four recent deaths in the Manhattan Men's House of Detention (The Tombs) were "suicides", another man was found hung in a New York City prison. Joseph Haimowitz, 23, accused of burglary, was found hanging by his belt in his cell in the Brooklyn House of Detention. Haimowitz was a $100 a day addict and he was released from the detoxification dormitory after only 3 days and left to withdraw by himself.

Belts, shoelaces and other "potentially dangerous articles" are supposed to be taken from prisoners who are suffering withdrawal.

The Grand Jury, under intense public pressure, was investigating the deaths of four prisoners--Julio Roldan, Raymond Lavon Moore, Anibal Davila and John Pearson. The Young Lords and the Inmates Liberation Front have charged that these four and other "suicides" have in fact been murders.

One guard, Arthur Blake, accused three guards of beating Raymond Lavon Moore. Furthermore, other prisoners said they saw guards dragging Lavon's body, which appeared to be dead, off the elevator and into his cell where he was found hanging.

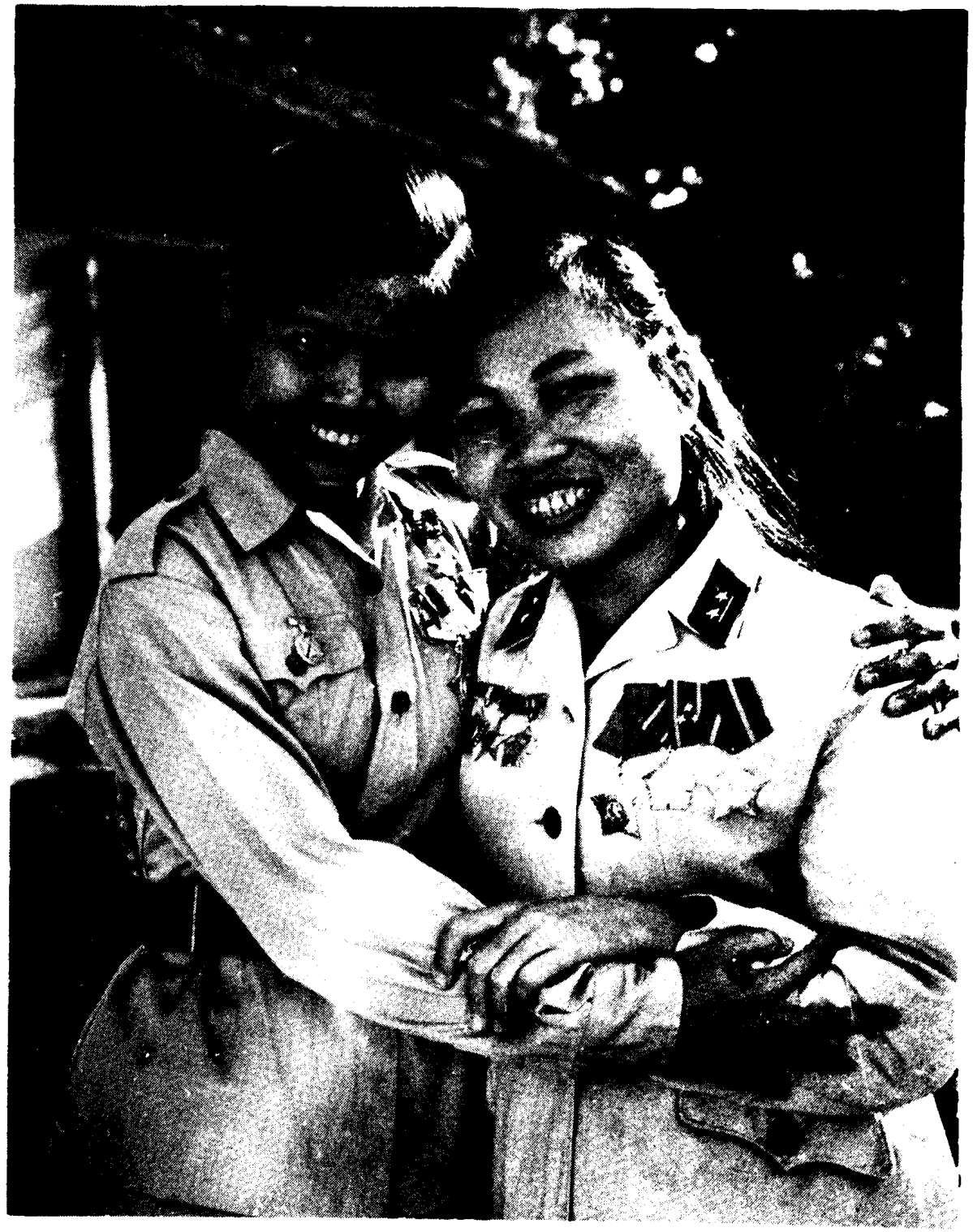
Blake, who was one of the hostages taken in last fall's prison riots and who later said he supported the demands of the inmates, has submitted his resignation to the Board of Correction.

A letter dated January, 1971, to Mayor Lindsay, Commissioner McGrath and officials of the N.Y. Dept. of Correction and signed by "The Inmates of the Tombs" says they

have been indiscriminately, consistently, and constantly, subjected to extreme inhuman treatment, brutality, torture and denial of basic human rights, for no purpose, other than blind and capricious vengence and a Machiavelian scheme to stifle any dissent, protest or refusal to submit to the barbarism and genocide of the Dept. of Correction's viciously callous and savage treatment of the prison population.

Among their demands are release from 24 hour lock up, prior visiting routine, recreational activities, feeding schedule, commisary privileges, daily showers, all taken away since the last rebellion on October 2-6. They want dismissal of all the charges against participants in the riots and formation of a Community Observation and Inspection Board as well as free access of all media to the jails. The Dept. of Correction is to stop the use of "administrative segregation" and "mental observation" sections which are used to isolate "leaders" and the institution of a living wage. Finally they demand "sanitary living conditions, civilized treatment, adequate medical care, adequate food, recreational facilities, educa-

CONTINUED ON THE INSIDE FRONT COVER----------



TOP: Women's militia members from North Vietnam. Credit the Guardian/LNS

BOTTOM: KIDS PLAY AT SCHOOL IN NORTH VIETNAM. Guardian/LNS

All four drawings are by Kathe Kollwitz, a German artist who was active from around 1900 to 1940. Credit LNS

BOBBY AND ERICKA MUST BE SET FREE

THE TRIAL OF CHAIRMAN BOBBY SEALE & SISTER ERICKA HUGGINS
OF THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY IS a----
LEGAL LYNCHING!!

COME TO NEW HAVEN MARCH 13 - 12 NOON

MASSIVE PEOPLES ACTION

~ SHORT RALLY - MUSIC, SPEAKERS ~

march beginning from Beaver Pond Park (watch for maps)
to the New Haven Superior Court. Everyone PLEASE
bring posters, banners, & revolutionary graphics. Our message is clear:

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

The survival of Bobby and Ericka, and all Political Prisoners
depends on the survival of the peoples' struggle.
SUPPORT THE SURVIVAL PROGRAMS IN THE NEW HAVEN
COMMUNITY. When you come to New Haven to show your
solidarity with Ericka and Bobby bring.....

A CAN OF FOOD FOR THE FREE FOOD PROGRAM

To you, one can of food may be only symbolic. But thousands of cans of food brought by sisters and brothers from all across America will be a loving, revolutionary contribution.

THE People Will Survive
AND WIN

WE'RE HERE AND STRONGER THAN EVER

MASSIVE PEOPLES ACTION

FROM NEW HAVEN PANTHER DEFENSE COMMITTEE. CREDIT LNS

Top: in the park, N.Y.C. Women's Graphics Collective of LNS. Credit LNS

Bottom:
In the subway. By Women's Graphics Collective of LNS.

GOD FORBIDS ABORTION
ABORTION IS MURDER!
SIGN NOW FOR LIFE

TOP: G.M. worker in Detroit. Photo by Women's Graphics Collective of LNS.

BOTTOM: In Port Authority Bus Terminal New York. Various groups, including the Black Panther Party maintain tables on the main floor. According to the photographer, there are always this many men around the table! By LNS Women's Graphics Collective

tall
skinny
plain

tall
skinny
plain i am
ericka, 22,
fuzzy hair
droopy eyes
long feet
i love people
love nature
love love
i am a revolutionary
nothing special
one soul
one life willing
to give it
ready to die...

21 december 1970
7 pm niantic

for paula:
(who ran from the camp
and was eventually caught)

hopes that render me speechless
fly through my soul
the reality of now is
too much to accept the
racism, fascism and oppression
we suffer / have suffered is
numbing my soul
if it is true that they
have stifled your attempt
to breathe air and see
life and be a part of the
chaos that is the streets
then i cry inside
because no one will
understand outside tears
for you—or those like you—
strange it is for you for i only
know your face and soul personalities
sometimes
don't matter . . .
but that's good enough you are a
part of me sister-love the part of me
that has been and will one day be . . .
every door is not locked.

"don't let those silly fascists pluck at your nerves . . . smile and know that they are sad and completely void of the love that people like you possess."

the oldness of new things
fascinate me like a new
feeling about love about people
snow, highways that
sparkle at night, talk,
laughter . . .
that old longing for freedom
that this place constantly
renews—it all makes
me know that humankind
has longed to be free ever forever
since its break from the
whole
maybe the longing for
freedom will soon make
others homesick for our
natural state in / with
earth, air, fire, water
not dead
but living
not asking for freedom—
but free—

Ericka Huggins in the snow as she leaves the courthouse in Bridgeport, after testifying in a suit against the state. Since no photographers are allowed outside the New Haven courthouse, this is the only recent picture we have of Ericka. See message from Bobby and Ericka on page 5. Also see announcement of demo in New Haven on P-3. Poems are by Ericka, written in Niantic State Prison.

end graphics